Appl. No. 09/896,820 (Parent) Amdt. dated September 17, 2003 Preliminary Amendment

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1, 3-12 and 14-20 will be pending and presented for examination. Claims 2 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 6, 14, 16 and 19 have been amended. Early action on the merits is respectfully requested. No new mater has been entered with the amendments to the claims.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted.

Joseph R. Snyder Reg. No. 39,381

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor

San Francisco, California 94111-3834

Tel: 925-472-5000 Fax: 415-576-0300 Attachments

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